

What is claimed is:

- 1           1.     A control station for two-way satellite communication,  
2 comprising:  
3           an RF section for transmitting a broadcast signal and receiving a  
4 return channel uplink;  
5           a plurality of burst channel demodulators for demodulating the  
6 return channel uplink;  
7           a timing section including a delay receiver, an echo timing receiver,  
8 and a timing processor receiving outputs from the delay receiver and the  
9 echo timing receiver;  
10          a frame pulse generator coupled to the plurality of burst channel  
11 demodulators and the timing section,  
12          wherein the frame pulse generator provides a superframe marker  
13 pulse to the timing section at a first fixed time interval and concurrently  
14 provides a superframe header which is included in the broadcast signal,  
15          wherein the frame pulse generator pulses the plurality of burst  
16 channel demodulators at a second fixed time interval different from the  
17 first fixed time interval and at a time later than a time of the superframe  
18 marker pulse by a space timing offset interval.
- 1           2.     The control station of claim 1, wherein the space timing offset  
2 interval is approximately equal to a maximum round-trip time from a  
3 furthest receiver plus two frame duration intervals.
- 1           3.     The control station of claim 1, wherein the first fixed time  
2 interval is equal to an integral number of frame duration intervals.
- 1           4.     The control station of claim 3, wherein the integral number of  
2 frame duration intervals is equal to eight.

1           5.     The control station of claim 1, wherein the second fixed time  
2 interval is approximately 45 msec.

1           6.     The control station of claim 1, wherein a frame duration time  
2 interval is approximately equal to the second fixed time interval.

1           7.     The control station of claim 6, wherein the frame duration  
2 time interval is approximately 45 msec.

1           8.     The control station of claim 1, wherein the broadcast signal is  
2 an asynchronous DVB transport stream.

1           9.     The control station of claim 1, wherein the return channel  
2 uplink is a TDMA signal.

1           10.    A transceiver for transmitting a frame synchronized message,  
2 comprising:  
3           a receiver which detects a frame reference marker and a control  
4 node timing message in a received broadcast signal;  
5           a local clock adapted to tag the detected frame reference marker  
6 with a local reception time;  
7           a timing recovery section which uses the control node timing  
8 message to determine a transmit frame start time; and  
9           a transmitter adapted to uplink a message during an assigned  
10 period after the transmit frame start time.

1           11.    The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the timing recovery  
2 section uses the local reception time and a local offset time to determine  
3 the transmit frame start time.

1           12.   The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the timing recovery  
2 section compensates for a satellite drift.

1           13.   The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the control node timing  
2 message provides timing information for a previously transmitted frame  
3 reference marker.

1           14.   The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the timing recovery  
2 section is adapted to correct for a space timing offset.

1           15.   The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the timing recovery  
2 section is adapted to derive a symbol timing reference using a receiver bit  
3 arrival rate.

1           16.   The transceiver of claim 10, wherein the transmitter is  
2 adapted and controlled to transmit within a TDMA frame in accordance  
3 with a time-slot allocation scheme.

1           17.   A method for providing communication timing information  
2 from a control station, comprising:  
3           generating a timing marker;  
4           determining a control station timing delay; and  
5           providing the timing marker and the control station timing delay in  
6 a message received by a remote user.

1           18.   The method of claim 17, wherein the timing marker is a  
2 superframe marker.

1           19.   The method of claim 18, wherein the superframe marker is  
2 provided to a timing section of the control station.

1           20.   The method of claim 17, wherein the message received by the  
2 remote user includes a time delay associated with a satellite drift.

1           21.   The method of claim 17, wherein the control station timing  
2 delay corresponds to a previous timing marker provided in a prior  
3 message to the remote user.

1           22.   The method of claim 18, wherein the superframe marker is  
2 periodically provided in messages to the remote user at a first fixed  
3 interval.

1           23.   The method of claim 17, further comprising providing an  
2 inroute channel message to an inroute receiver.

1           24.   The method of claim 22, further comprising pulsing an  
2 inroute receiver at a time later than a time of the superframe marker  
3 pulse by a space timing offset interval.

1           25.   The method of claim 24, wherein the space timing offset  
2 interval is approximately equal to a maximum round-trip time from a  
3 furthest remote user plus two frame duration intervals.

1           26.   The method of claim 17, wherein the message to the remote  
2 user is broadcast on an asynchronous DVB transport stream.

1           27.   A method for transmitting a frame synchronized message,  
2 comprising:

3           receiving a frame reference marker in a local receiver of one of a  
4 plurality of distributed user nodes;

5           timestamping the received frame reference marker with a local  
6 reception time;  
7           receiving a control node timing differential at the local receiver;  
8           correcting the local reception time by applying the control node  
9 timing differential and a local offset time;  
10          determining a start time for a return channel frame using the  
11 corrected local reception time; and  
12          transmitting a first message from one of the plurality of distributed  
13 user nodes during an assigned period within the return channel frame.

1           28.   The method of claim 27, wherein correcting the local  
2 reception time includes applying a satellite drift correction.

1           29.   The method of claim 27, wherein the control node timing  
2 differential is received after the received frame reference marker is  
3 timestamped with the local reception time.

1           30.   The method of claim 27, further comprising locally deriving a  
2 system symbol timing reference using a bit arrival rate in the local  
3 receiver.

1           31.   The method of claim 27, further comprising centrally  
2 receiving a plurality of different user messages, wherein each of the  
3 plurality of different user messages is transmitted within the return  
4 channel frame in accordance with a time-slot allocation scheme.

1           32.   The method of claim 27, further comprising transmitting a  
2 second message from a different one of the plurality of distributed user  
3 nodes during a different assigned period within the return channel frame  
4 in accordance with a time-slot allocation scheme, wherein the different

5 one of the plurality of distributed user nodes uses the frame reference  
6 marker to determine the different assigned period.

1 33. A communication system for sharing return channel uplink  
2 timing information, comprising:  
3 a common symbol timing reference;  
4 a first control station transmitting a first broadcast data stream in  
5 accordance with the common symbol timing reference,  
6 said first control station including a first delay tracker to determine  
7 a first transmission delay associated with the first control station;  
8 said first broadcast data stream including a non-real time frame  
9 marker and a first transmission delay message;  
10 a first receiver to receive the first broadcast data stream,  
11 said first receiver receiving the first delay message and  
12 timestamping the non-real time frame marker with a first local time of  
13 receipt;  
14 a first timing recovery circuit to determine an upcoming real-time  
15 return channel frame start time by adjusting the first local time of receipt  
16 by the first transmission delay and a first receiver offset time; and  
17 a first local transmitter to uplink a message in a predetermined  
18 time-slot after the real-time return channel frame start time.

1 34. The communication system of claim 33, further comprising:  
2 a second control station transmitting a second broadcast data  
3 stream in accordance with the common symbol timing reference,  
4 said second control station including a second delay tracker to  
5 determine a second transmission delay associated with the second control  
6 station;  
7 said second broadcast data stream including non-real time frame  
8 marker and a second delay message;

9 a second receiver to receive the second broadcast data stream,  
10 said second receiver receiving the second delay message and  
11 timestamping the non-real time frame marker with a second local time of  
12 receipt;

13 a second timing recovery circuit to determine real-time return  
14 channel frame start time by adjusting the second local time of receipt by  
15 the second transmission delay and a second receiver offset time; and

16 a second local transmitter to uplink a second user message in a  
17 different predetermined time-slot after the real-time return channel frame  
18 start time.

1 35. The communication system of claim 33, wherein said first  
2 broadcast data stream is an asynchronous DVB transport stream.

1 36. The communication system of claim 33, wherein said first  
2 broadcast data stream is encapsulated in an IP/DVB protocol layer.

1 37. The communication system of claim 33, further comprising a  
2 communication satellite to relay the transmitted first broadcast data  
3 stream to the first receiver.

1 38. A method for sharing a set of TDMA channels between a  
2 plurality of uplink channels, comprising:

3 providing a non-real time system reference timing message to a  
4 remote user;

5 calculating a message transport delay;

6 offsetting a local time reference from the non-real time system  
7 timing by the message transport delay;

8 determining a realtime TDMA transmit frame timing from the offset  
9 local time reference; and

10           transmitting uplink channel information in accordance with the  
11 realtime TDMA transmit frame timing and a TDMA time-sharing  
12 arrangement.

1           39. The method of claim 38, further comprising receiving a frame  
2 marker message encapsulated in a layered transport stream.

1           40. The method of claim 39, wherein said layered transport  
2 stream is an asynchronous DVB transport stream.

1           41. The method of claim 38, wherein the non-real time system  
2 timing message is provided to a plurality of remote users.

1           42. The method of claim 38, wherein the non-real time system  
2 reference timing message is provided to a plurality of remote users over  
3 more than one layered transport stream.